

Investing the future and ensuring our students are well prepared is incredibly important. We must invest in our schools to provide all our students with the resources, skills and training they need to be leaders in our global economy. We can no longer expect our students to win the future if we don't give them the building blocks for success. Here in Congress, I am fighting against short-sighted education cuts and I strongly support funding for our Central Coast schools and schools across our country.

Most recently, I am pleased to inform you that I voted in support of the bill that keeps interest rates on government-backed student loans from doubling. Without an agreement, student loan rates would have doubled on July 1, which would affect over 7 million students. As you may know, there was a lengthy debate between both parties about how we should pay the \$6 billion price tag to keep student loan interest rates from doubling from 3.4% to 6.8%. President Obama was vocal on the issue and with his leadership, the Democrats offered a plan to offset the \$6 billion cost by closing **a tax loopholes for corporations that ship jobs overseas. The Republicans didn't like this idea so they suggested pillaging \$6 billion from an important health care fund that provides cancer screenings,** childhood immunizations, disease prevention and supports initiatives to reduce birth defects.

With each side seemingly deadlocked on how to pay for the extension, both sides worked together to reach a compromise to find \$6 billion by changing eligibility criteria for the future student loans and through increases in employer contributions to pension funds. This deal was included in the transportation and highway funding bill (H.R. 4348), which I supported on the House floor and was signed into law by President Obama July 6, 2012.

In addition to fighting to keep college affordable, I strongly support funding for early childhood education programs, like Head Start. The Democrats and President Obama want to increase Head Start funding for FY2013 to \$8 billion, which would be an \$85 million increase compared to the FY2012 level. Sadly, the Republicans don't want to invest in education and their outline slashes \$430.3 million from Head Start in FY2013 and plans to cut another \$1.5 billion in FY2014. If the GOP get their way in FY2013, it would cut off access to Head Start for 200,000 students around the country, cut \$53.7 million from California Head Start funding which would eliminate 6,715 enrollment slots for poor children and 2,130 job losses state-wide. The situation for 2014 for Head Start in California would be even more dire if this budget were enacted, cutting \$188.8 million in funding, eliminating 20,824 enrollment slots, and leading to 7,510 job losses.

Early childhood education programs and keeping college affordable are vital – but equally important is improving the quality of K-12 education, especially for our special education students. Here in Congress, I am a leader in supporting funds for the Department of Education provides critical dollars to our local schools and also provides Title I and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grants. These programs provide formula funding to ensure that underserved populations, such as lower income children and students with disabilities, have a better chance at meeting academic achievement standards. Without these programs, many schools in low-income neighborhoods would be unable to provide necessary additional

academic support for these students. As the budget process for FY2013 continues, I will continue to support these important programs as well as support efforts to strengthen all parts of our education system.